

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TEGUCI 04005 211956Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
/068 W

-----068181 220428Z /13

R 211749Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1306
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 4005

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, HO, MPOL
SUBJ: JUNTA DISSOLVES ADVISORY COUNCIL

1. THE CHIEF OF STATE'S ADVISORY COUNCIL WAS DISSOLVED ABRUPTLY ON AUGUST 17 BY THE MILITARY JUNTA. THE DECREE ENDING THE COUNCIL'S EXISTENCE NOTED IT HAD ACCOMPLISHED ITS ORIGINAL GOALS, SAID THE FUNDS FOR ITS OPERATION COULD BE BETTER SPENT ON EDUCATION AND HEALTH AND THANKED THE (FORMER) MEMBERS FOR THEIR SERVICES.

2. THE COUNCIL, IN WHOSE FORMATION CESAR BATRES WAS ACTIVE, WAS ORIGINALLY ESTABLISHED IN MARCH 1976 FOR THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF DRAFTING AN ELECTORAL LAW AND ALSO TO PROVIDE ADVICE TO THE CHIEF OF STATE. COUNCIL MEMBERS INCLUDED REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNIVERSITY, STUDENTS, LABOR, CAMPESINOS, THE ARMED FORCES, TEACHERS, PROFESSIONALS, WOMEN'S GROUPS, COOPERATIVES AND THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY. THE INNOVATION AND UNITY PARTY WAS A MEMBER FOR A SHORT TIME BUT DROPPED OUT, WHILE THE NATIONAL AND LIBERAL PARTIES REFUSED TO JOIN. HONDURAS' TWO TRADITIONAL PARTIES
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TEGUCI 04005 211956Z

ARGUED THAT THEY REPRESENTED THE MAJORITY OF HONDURANS AND REFUSED TO ACCEPT A MINORITY POSITION ON WHAT THEY VIEWED AS A POWERLESS ORGAN.

3. NEVERTHELESS, THE ADVISORY COUNCIL EVOLVED INTO A PUBLIC FORUM WHERE THE VARIOUS GROUPS REPRESENTED COULD MAKE THEIR CONCERNS KNOWN. IN ADDITION, ALTHOUGH IT DIDN'T HAVE LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY,

THE GOVERNMENT OFTEN CONSULTED WITH THE COUNCIL ON MATTERS OF INTEREST TO ITS MEMBERS AND IT CONTRIBUTED TO VARIOUS LAWS APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS. MANY COUNCIL MEMBERS WERE PROMINENT RESPECTED PERSONS. AFTER THE ELECTORAL LAW WAS PASSED THE COUNCIL BEGAN TO RECEIVE INCREASING CRITICISM FOR THE LENGTH OF TIME IT HAD TAKEN TO DO SO. CRITICS CLAIMED THE COUNCIL WAS A SUBTERFUGE TO PROLONG MILITARY RULE AND ALSO POINTED TO THE HIGH SALARIES RECEIVED BY ITS MEMBERS. SEVERAL OF ITS COMPONENT GROUPS TALKED OF WITHDRAWING, ALTHOUGH OTHERS FELT IT COULD CONTINUE TO PROVIDE USEFUL SERVICE. ONE OF THOSE WHO FELT SO WAS ITS PRESIDENT, COL. CESAR ELVIR SIERRA, WHO ONLY DAYS BEFORE HAD ANNOUNCED THE COUNCIL WOULD CONTINUE, APPARENTLY WITH THE MILITARY JUNTA'S APPROVAL. IN SPITE OF HIS PROTESTATIONS THAT MILITARY DISCIPLINE PROHIBITED HIM FROM COMMENTING DURING A RADIO INTERVIEW, COL. ELVIR'S VOICE BETRAYED HIS OWN EMOTIONS.

5. OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS HAVE BEEN UNCOMPLIMENTARY ABOUT THE UNCEREMONIOUS CLOSING, AND ONE NEWSPAPER SUMMED UP THE STORY BY COMMENTING, "IN SPITE OF ITS PROBLEMS, THE COUNCIL WAS RECEPTIVE TO POPULAR COMPLAINTS." THE NEARLY 100 ADMINISTRATIVE AND JANITORIAL EMPLOYEES, DISMISSED WITH ONLY TWO WEEKS SEVERANCE PAY AND WHO MADE LESS THAN COUNCIL MEMBERS, HAVE RECEIVED MORE PUBLIC SYMPATHY.

6. COMMENT: DISSOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL WAS REPORTEDLY ONE OF THE DEMANDS THE ARMED FORCES SUPERIOR COUNCIL MADE OF GENERAL MELGAR.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TEGUCI 04005 211956Z

THE COUNCIL'S DEMISE WILL NOT BE REGRETTED BY THE TWO MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES, NOR PROBABLY BY MOST OF THE ORGANIZATIONS ON IT. ITS PRIMARY PURPOSE HAD VISIBLY BEEN ACCOMPLISHED AND PUBLIC ATTENTION IS TURNING INCREASINGLY TO THE POLITICAL PROCESS. HOWEVER, AS WIDELY NOTED, WITH ALL ITS FAULTS, THE ADVISORY COUNCIL PROVIDED A CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION ON PUBLIC CONCERNS TO THE CHIEF OF STATE THAT WAS USEFUL, ESPECIALLY FOR GROUPS THAT WERE OFTEN CRITICAL OF THE GOVERNMENT. IT HELPED TO MAKE THE MILITARY, AS AN INSTITUTION, MORE AWARE OF CIVILIAN PROBLEMS, AND AS SUCH PROVIDED A USEFUL SERVICE. THE SUPERIOR COUNCIL HAS NOT INDICATED HOW OR IF IT WILL REPLACE THIS.
JARAMILLO

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: JUNTA, REORGANIZATIONS, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TEGUCI04005
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780342-0608
Format: TEL
From: TEGUCIGALPA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780840/aaaabhjq.tel
Line Count: 106
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 6d0fdd5f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1671718
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: JUNTA DISSOLVES ADVISORY COUNCIL
TAGS: PINT, MPOL, HO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/6d0fdd5f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014